

NERA also estimates that atmospheric CO₂ concentrations would be reduced by less than one-half of 1 percent—that is if they are successful in doing this—equating to reductions in global average temperatures of less than two one-hundredths of a degree. So all these things they say they might be able to accomplish, they have studied it and say it is just not true.

I have already talked about the fact that within the President's own administration, Lisa Jackson, the former head of the EPA, said even if they are successful, even if they are right about this, it is not going to reduce CO₂ emissions because this isn't where the problem is.

So this is going on right now. We have a committee that is clearly going to be working on this so the American people will be aware of what is happening. The Energy Information Administration determined that the China agreement would result in a 34-percent increase in electricity prices.

I bring this up because we heard in the President's speech on Tuesday that they were negotiating with China and some very successful negotiations took place. The Presiding Officer remembers that this was back when our Secretary of State went over and met with President Xi of China and came back and said it was a successful meeting. What came out of that negotiation? China said: Well, we will keep increasing our emissions until 2020, and then we will look at it and decide whether we want to lower it. That is not much of a negotiation, and it was not very comforting to us.

A comprehensive survey conducted by a Harvard political scientist shows that people who are worried about climate change are only willing to pay energy bills up to 5 percent higher. Whether it is global warming or climate change, the American people understand this proposal is in no way about protecting the environment or improving public health. This rule is an executive and bureaucratic power grab unlike anything this country has ever seen, and it is merely the tip of the spear in a radical war against affordable energy and fossil fuels.

At a time when domestic oil and gas prices through hydraulic fracturing continue to be one of the only bright spots in our economy, a lot of people are trying to stop this from taking place. I kind of wind up with this because I think it is important. I come from an oil State, so I have to buy it. I understand that. The process of hydraulic fracturing started in my State of Oklahoma—in Duncan, OK—in 1948. Did you know that by their own admission the EPA said there has never been a documented case of groundwater contamination since they started using hydraulic fracturing?

When the President made the statement in the State of the Union Message that the United States has dramatically increased in the last 5 years our production of oil and gas, that is

correct, but that is in spite of the President. We have enjoyed a 61-percent increase in the production of oil and gas in America in the last 5 years—61 percent. However, all of that is either on State or private land. On Federal land we have had a reduction of 6 percent. So I look at that, and I believe it when people say that if we had been able to increase production on Federal land such as we have done in the last 5 years on private land and State land, we could be totally—100 percent—dependent from any other country in developing our resources.

So I am committed to using our committee, the Environment and Public Works Committee, not only to conduct a rigorous oversight of the Obama EPA policies which are running roughshod over our economy, operating outside the scope of the law, and directly ignoring the intent of Congress but also to rein in this out-of-control agency through any and all means at our disposal.

This has been a problem. People used to say that it was just big business that wanted to reduce these regulations. That isn't true. As I mentioned before, the farmers of America—just in my State of Oklahoma—say the over-regulation of EPA is the most difficult issue they have to deal with.

With that, I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. RUBIO). The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE ACT

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The assistant bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to approve the Keystone XL Pipeline.

Pending:

Murkowski amendment No. 2, in the nature of a substitute.

Fischer amendment No. 18 (to amendment No. 2), to provide limits on the designation of new federally protected land.

Sanders amendment No. 24 (to amendment No. 2), to express the sense of Congress regarding climate change.

Vitter/Cassidy modified amendment No. 80 (to amendment No. 2), to provide for the distribution of revenues from certain areas of the Outer Continental Shelf.

Menendez/Cantwell amendment No. 72 (to amendment No. 2), to ensure private property cannot be seized through condemnation or eminent domain for the private gain of a foreign-owned business entity.

Wyden amendment No. 27 (to amendment No. 2), to amend the Internal Revenue Code

of 1986 to clarify that products derived from tar sands are crude oil for purposes of the Federal excise tax on petroleum.

Lee amendment No. 71 (to amendment No. 2), to require a procedure for issuing permits to drill.

Murkowski (for Blunt/Inhofe) amendment No. 78 (to amendment No. 2), to express the sense of the Senate regarding the conditions for the President entering into bilateral or other international agreements regarding greenhouse gas emissions without proper study of any adverse economic effects, including job losses and harm to the industrial sector, and without the approval of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Alaska.

Ms. MURKOWSKI. Mr. President, we are back to continue debate and voting on amendments to this bipartisan Keystone XL bill.

I will focus on two main subjects today. The first is to speak to what I think is the good progress we have made on this bill, moving us toward ultimately a final vote and final passage. I believe we probably surprised a few people yesterday by adopting an amendment on climate change that few thought would be adopted. We have now processed a total of nine amendments. Some would say, well, nine is not much, but just to put it into context, last year, the Senate held just 15 rollcall votes on amendments. That was in all of 2014. Over just a couple of days here in this new Congress, we are already at 60 percent of last year's total, and it is still January. We have eight amendments that are pending at this moment and set to be voted on today. We will work out the timing and order of those votes. My hope is that we will exceed last year's total today.

I believe our productivity has been good. I appreciate the cooperation of the ranking member on the committee. What we have been able to do with this measure is important because I think it stands in pretty stark contrast to what we have seen in recent years and, quite honestly, to the delays the Keystone XL Pipeline has faced over those years.

The second part of my comments this morning—I wish to provide a little bit of perspective about how long this cross-border permit has been pending, awaiting a final decision by the President.

Sometimes when we talk in terms of the raw numbers, some ask: What does that really mean? What does it mean to be on the 2,316th day that has passed since the company seeking to build this pipeline first filed its first permit with the State Department?

It has been more than 6 years, more than 76 months, and more than 330 weeks.

The President noted in his State of the Union Address this week that Keystone XL was just a single oil pipeline. And he is right—it is just a single oil pipeline. We have multiple pipelines that cross the border. We have hundreds of pipelines that cross the country. So it begs the question: How and why has it taken so long to get action